

THE FOOTLIGHT FANCIES OF EARLY WINTER

Looking Into the Lobbies

By EARLE DORSEY

Mixing Up the Drama

A soda-mixer's nightmare might approximate, perchance, the variegated form and color of the four legitimate theater offerings that await popular verdicts in Washington this week. To begin with, the list ranges from mystery melodrama to extravaganza and back through comedy and character romance.

Perhaps the most appealing feature of the dramatic week at hand lies in the rare opportunity it affords the confirmed first-nighter to grace the opening ceremonies of at least three productions, all of which is due to the fact that Mr. Brady's production at the Garrick is deferring its premiere until Tuesday. All hands, therefore, have the chance to sit in at the opening of either Nora Bayes' or Robert Warwick's piece tonight; the "Follies" opening tomorrow night, and the Garrick premiere on Tuesday. Alphonse-and-Gaston procedure of this sort is unusual, if not irregular.

Intense curiosity surrounds the first American performance at the Garrick Tuesday night of William A. Brady's production of "The Young Visitors,"—the spelling is correct—an exceedingly daring and altogether interesting experiment in dramatizing a book by a 9-year-old miss named Daisy Ashford.

English literary circles have grown hysterical over the appearance of "The Young Visitors" in book and dramatic form, with an introductory preface to the book by Sir James Matthew Barrie. Barrie seems willing enough to appear as sponsor for this juvenile effort which was written, apparently, in the '80's. Barrie has been accused of the authorship but the accusation is accusation only and in the absence of more convincing proof, Daisy Ashford, aetat 9, is accepted as author.

If "The Young Visitors" is really the work of a child, it is remarkable not only for its amazing though frequently distorted character-drawing but for its example of childish literary endurance, which is an even rarer quality. The child has created, if child the author be, an imaginary but frequently satiric human universe, peopled with some rather amazing but startlingly social characters.

It is, in reality, a species of Alice-in-Wonderland so far as the child-author has costumed her characters and built her scenes but it shares not the Carroll eccentricity of structure. On the other hand, it marches with droll but undeviating directness from introduction to a romantic climax that is properly stilted—if one reads it that way, but which may be invested, easily enough, with a compelling note of satire not easily associated with the work of even a juvenile precocity.

The great trouble I found in reading "The Young Visitors" was a feeling that after all, I might be walking straight into a trap by assuming the adolescence of the author. One might well essay any amount of praise of a similar work by a child, but "The Young Visitors" by Barrie himself would be quite another matter. In the latter case, it would consist of an eccentric bit of story telling of no particular power beyond a certain keen satire on social climbing, purposely misspelled throughout after the manner of "Dere Mabel."

However, be its author bairn or Barrie, one cannot help but regard its dramatization as one of the most interesting and daring theatrical experiments of the season. My own fancy was caught by the news that the dramatization reveals its characters in the weird and outlandish colors and habiliments in which the ingenious fancy of the child clothed them. This alone should be convulsing as a spectacle and the play itself a zest to a jaded palate. The premiere, as aforesaid, is Tuesday.

Warwick Returns to the Stage.

Mr. Robert Warwick's long-expected return from shadowland to the legitimate has finally materialized. He bows at Poli's tonight in a mystery-melodrama named "The Dauntless Three" which has been constructed along lines that seem not altogether dissociated with cinema production. The play itself is by Horace Annesley Vachell and Walter Hackett—good workmen, both—and the plot formation is explained by the producer in this wise:

"An adventurer starts out in search of a missing blue diamond. A rich American hires the adventurer to find the diamond after it has been stolen from the safe of a South African mining company. The mining company employs a girl detective to look for it and a company of desperate criminals also join in the search, otherwise, the dauntless three. In the meantime, the gem is safely hidden in the house of Mangassaroglou, a Levantine merchant of Constantinople. The merchant sells the stone, kills the purchaser, resells the gem, again kills the purchaser, and how and why the third purchaser is not killed, is told by the adventurer, in what might be termed the drop-stitch method.

"There are four acts in the play presented shuttle-wise. The first act begins with the adventurer telling how the deed was accomplished and the second act takes us back to the actual accomplishment. From there we jump ahead four weeks and then back two weeks, finishing the final scene with the present, with a particular bit of interest in the fact that the adventurer falls in love with the unsuccessful girl detective."

That's the plot and the structure thereof. Concerning Mr. Warwick, there is reason to believe that his reappearance on the stage will meet with a qualifying response. The popularizing power of the films is incalculable and while a successful play will be of assistance, there should be enough admirers of this former movie star to give him a successful season, regardless of vehicle.

And now we come to the musical end of the week's docket, upheld by Nora Bayes, America's greatest female coon-shouter, in a new offering; and additionally supported by Mr. Ziegfeld's greatly and justly celebrated "Follies." Miss Bayes' new play, which has been set to music by Seymour Simons, has been written by a brother of the critical craft—Al Weeks, of the Detroit News. Regardless of Mr. Weeks' previous lack of literary fame, there is no particular reason why "Her Family Tree" should not reveal itself as an altogether droll and finished bit of satire. Mr. Weeks' freshness in the dramatic field should be a contributing factor to the value of his work. Doubtless he has cherished and nurtured and developed his idea for many a long week ere he found the redoubtable Nora in a producing mood. The theme itself—a satire on the subject of reincarnation—is an intriguing topic and come what may, Nora Bayes takes rank with Jolson in the comic effectiveness of her warbling.

"The Follies"—what can one say about Mr. Ziegfeld's annual festival of color and form that has not already been spoken?

This humble deponent has already earned the rebuke of one producer for insinuating that Ziegfeld is still the old master in his line. The cast alone is too much for this feeble index-finger so all that remains is to roll out the adding machine, have Willie Fowler install it alongside F-2 at the National tomorrow night and punch the keys as the parade rumbles past.

Today's Amusements.

POLI'S—Robert Warwick in "The Dauntless Three."
BELASCO—Nora Bayes in "Her Family Tree."
B. F. KEITH'S—Vaudeville, matinee daily.
STRAND—Vaudeville and films, matinee daily.
GAYETY—"Step Lively Girls" matinee daily.
FOLLY—"Whirl of Mirth" matinee daily.
MOORE'S RIATO—"The Penalty."
CRANDALL'S METROPOLITAN—Nanivova in "Madame Peacock."
LOEW'S PALACE—Charles Ray in "An Old-Fashioned Boy."
MOORE'S GARDEN—"The Forbidden Thing."
LOEW'S COLUMBIA—"The Restless Sex."
CRANDALL'S KNICKERBOCKER—Nanivova in "Madame Peacock."
CRANDALL'S—Lew Cody in "Occasionally Yours."

Spends His "Last \$1,000"
In Appeal to PlaygoersEarl Carroll Asks New York to Save His Play
From Untimely End.

The success recently scored by that precocious young stage wizard, Earl Carroll, at Poli's Theater here with his newest play, "Daddy Dimples," which he wrote in collaboration with George Barr McCutcheon, has probably assisted materially in changing the fortunes of Mr. Carroll, which were ebbing low some days ago, when he flooded New York with advertising that he paid for with his "last \$1,000."

This advertising was Carroll's final gamble in an effort to save from oblivion his really meritorious play, "The Lady of the Lamp," which, he declares, sinister forces of the theater were attempting to snuff out to satisfy their own requirements. Carroll's advertising appeal to the public to save his play has apparently borne fruit, but it seems to be an illuminating example of a sordid and tawdry financial game that is played behind the scenes all too often, with the theater-going public frequently the victims.

Carroll's advertisement was a nine day wonder in Manhattan. After setting forth that he is spending his "last \$1,000" in order to buy up the "Lady of the Lamp," at the Republic Theater, of which he is the author and which he produced in association with A. H. Woods, subsequently the "80's" is seen through feminine eyes of S. William A. Brady's cast includes Harold Anstruther, Herbert Yost, Marie Goff, Lionel Paley, Leslie Palmer, Kathleen Andrus, Grace Dougherty, Ruby Gordon, Albert Shrub, Robert Brott, Bernard Savage, Charles Hanna, Wilfrid Cawthorne, Peggy Harvey, Frank Hollins, George Fredricks, Paul Stamford, Mary Haswell, Josephine Bernard, Florence Burdett, Fredricka Greville, F. Serano Keating and Marvin Rapp.

"I am, perhaps, the youngest author and producer in New York, therefore, if I appear undignified, chalk it up to inexperience. I have written a successful play or two in the past, I have been ambitious, and I have saved my money; all with one single aim—to give to the theater the finest plays I could. I believe that there are still some good, clean, sweet, wholesome, homely people left in the world whose hearts are not so callous that they cannot appreciate an evening's entertainment that doesn't have a George and a folding bed, or a semite woman occupying the center of the stage.

"I received hundreds of flattering letters, appreciative phone calls, and personal commendations of the artistic merit of this play. "Ninety-nine out of 100 have said it is great; that it is a beautiful love story; that it is a dramatic triumph, and that the finish of the second act is the most thrilling climax of the season.

"I had very little money to spend on advertising. I thought that this mouth-to-mouth publicity would make my business jump beyond the overhead expenses and that my box office would say 'Success!'

"The Lady" has been rocking along for weeks. Just getting by, slightly—somewhat too slightly at times. But I hung on. "Other theatrical interests, of great power, tried to take the theater away from me in order to house another attraction, and every effort has been made to snuff out 'The Lady of the Lamp.' The ticket agencies were intimidated, my advertising limited, and my electric lights turned out—but still I hung on.

"Now for the object of this final plunge.

"I am rolling my last \$1,000 to try to make good. If I lose, you'll find me game and smiling. If I win, it will be because you have helped me.

"If you have seen 'The Lady of the Lamp' and like it, won't you please urge some others to enjoy it also? If you haven't seen it, will you take a chance on my humble say-so—and come?

"If you don't like it, I want to do a John Wanamaker and be the first theatrical manager in America to refund the money of any dissatisfied customer.

"I shall keep the box office open until after the play. I personally will be on hand and I shall repay promptly the price of every ticket to every displeased purchaser. This is a sincere and earnest expression of my faith in 'The Lady of the Lamp,' and if I speak falsely all of my future statements to you may be judged accordingly.

"Now will you come?
"Yours faithfully,
"EARL CARROLL,
"Republic Theater."

Gilbert Selles, in a dispatch to The Herald, reports that Carroll's advertising plan worked.



WHO'S WHO IN THE PICTURE.
Above, Marie Goff in "The Young Visitors," at the Garrick (left); Nora Bayes in "Her Family Tree," at the Belasco (center); Mary Eaton in Ziegfeld "Follies," at National (right). Below, Robert Warwick in "The Dauntless Three," Poli's.

A Nine-Year-Old Novelist

What gives every indication of being one of the most interesting productions the American theater has seen in many seasons will be that of "The Young Visitors," a dramatization by Mrs. George Norman and Margaret MacKenzie of Daisy Ashford's famous book which almost overnight achieved a sensational success both in England and America.

It is supposed to have been written by Daisy Ashford at the age of 9, though at the time of its publication and since there has been considerable speculation as to whether or not the real author may not be Sir James M. Barrie, whose delightful preface furnishes further ground for that opinion.

Whether or not Barrie is responsible for "The Young Visitors" it remains one of the most delightful, charming and wholly humorous pieces of writing that has come to light in many a day. Imagine the England of the early eighties seen through the eyes of an observing young maiden of 9! It is rich in ingenious humor and its characters have of course become internationally famous.

In dramatizing "The Young Visitors," Mrs. Norman and Miss MacKenzie have followed closely the engaging story that has delighted thousands of readers on the printed page. Mrs. Saltzman's plan is disclosed in all its humor and with the same charm that has made "The Young Visitors" an international triumph.

The story of "The Young Visitors" is told in three acts and seven scenes. The production of "The Young Visitors," which is unusual to a degree, is rich in novelty in both scenery and properties and is a duplication of that which delighted London.

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She was introduced to three managers and the author of one of the season's successes. Each of these gentlemen, upon hearing that she had experience and sought opportunity, suggested that she call the next morning at his office. She went first to the Playhouse, where William A. Brady engaged her for "Never Too Late," a play he was then rehearsing in the Manhattan Casino. The play failed, but Miss Goff emerged triumphant and Mr. Brady promptly re-engaged her for "At 2:45." Then followed her success in London in "The Man Who Came Back," and upon her return to this country Mrs. Goff started rehearsals for her present role in the dramatization of Daisy Ashford's famous book "The Young Visitors."

Marie Goff has demonstrated anew the value of the dance as a first aid to those who would secure a firm footing on the ladder of success in the theater, but unlike certain well known exponents of Lady Terpsichore, whose fame rests principally in their feet, she has demonstrated a new angle on the proposition and with unusual results.

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